

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ADDIS 01154 111100Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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P R 110949Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7620  
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 1154

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PBOR, ET, SO, US  
SUBJ: FURTHER COMMENTS OF ETHIOPIAN OFFICIAL ON SOMALI  
WITHDRAWAL

REF: A) STATE 060457; B) ADDIS ABABA 1120

SUMMARY AND COMMENT: WHILE NOT ADDRESSING SPECIFIC ISSUES OF PLACEMENT OF NEUTRAL OBSERVERS AND PERMISSION OF UNHINDERED AND PROMPT SOMALI WITHDRAWAL FREE FROM REPRISALS, AMERICAN AFFAIRS OFFICER BERHANE DERESSE DID COMMENT AT LENGTH ON OTHER ASPECTS OF AIDE MEMOIRE I PRESENTED TO HIM MARCH 9. HE ASSERTED PEOPLES LIVING IN OGADEN AREA ARE ETHIOPIANS AND THEIR RIGHTS WOULD BE RESPECTED WITHIN NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION (NDR) PROGRAM. HE THOUGHT IDEA OF ARMING SOMALIS, EVEN WITH "DEFENSIVE" WEAPONS, WAS INCONSISTENT WITH USG DESIRE FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN HORN. BERHANE ALSO CRITICIZED TARDINESS OF USG DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE SOMALIA'S WITHDRAWAL, ADDING IT WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE APPROPRIATE 6-7 MONTHS AGO. THERE WAS ALSO FAIR AMOUNT OF GIVE-AND-TAKE ON US POLICY TOWARD ETHIOPIA OVER PAST 18 MONTHS, BUT DID NOT COVER ANY NEW GROUND, BASICALLY REHASHING ARGUMENTS MADE DURING AARON DISCUSSION. END SUMMARY AND  
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COMMENT.

1. AFTER READING AIDE MEMOIRE ALONG LINES REFTTEL A, BERHANE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION THAT SOMALIA HAD LISTENED TO PRES CARTER'S APPEAL FOR WITHDRAWAL OF THEIR FORCES. HOWEVER HE THOUGHT SUCH EFFORTS, MADE 6-7 MONTHS EARLIER, WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE HELPFUL AND COULD HAVE SAVED MANY LIVES. I EXPLAINED

DIFFICULTIES USG HAD AT THAT TIME WITH ETHIOPIAN POLICY HIGHLY CRITICAL OF US AND OUR LACK OF MUCH INFLUENCE WITH SIAD BARRE GOVT. BERHANE ACCEPTED THIS IN PART, BUT STATED USG STILL COULD HAVE MADE FORCEFUL PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED PRINCIPLES.

2. COMMENTING ON "POSSIBILITY OF SOME DEFENSIVE" MILITARY EQUIPMENT BEING DELIVERED TO SOMALIA, BERHANE SAID THAT THIS DID NOT CORRESPOND TO STATED USG DESIRES FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN HORN. HE BELIEVED USG AND PRES CARTER WERE SINCERE IN THIS REGARD AND CHARACTERIZED SOMALIA AS A CONSTANT THREAT TO PEACE IN THE HORN AND THROUGHOUT AFRICA BECAUSE OF ITS REFUSAL TO RENOUNCE ITS IRREDENTIST AND EXPANSIONIST CLAIMS, NOT ONLY ON ETHIOPIA, BUT ALSO KENYA AND DJIBOUTI. EXPANSIONIST TERRITORIAL CLAIMS ENDANGERED SANCTITY OF ALL AFRICAN FRONTIERS AND BORDERS. BERHANE URGED THEREFORE, THAT USG LIMIT ANY ASSISTANCE IT MIGHT GIVE SOMALIA TO PURELY ECONOMIC AND HUMANITARIAN NEEDS.

3. ON WELFARE OF OGADENI PEOPLE, BERHANE SAID IT WAS IRONIC THAT WHEN SOMALIS WERE DESTROYING PROPERTY AND KILLING "THOUSANDS" OF ETHIOPIANS IN OGADEN THERE WERE NOT SUCH LOUD VOICES OF CONCERN RAISED, AS THERE IS NOW. NOW THAT ETHIOPIANS ARE RESTORING THEIR CONTROL OVER OWN TERRITORY AND OWN PEOPLE THERE IS SUDDENLY SUCH GREAT PUBLIC OUT-CRY ABOUT WELFARE OF THE AREA. IT WAS NOT ETHIOPIA WHO VIO-  
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LATED THE RIGHTS OF HER CITIZENS, THE OGADENI PEOPLES, BUT SOMALIA. NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION (NDR) PROGRAM PROVIDES FOR RIGHTS OF ALL NATIONALITIES WITHIN ETHIOPIA, AND SOMALI/OGADENI NATIONALITY WOULD BE GIVEN EQUAL TREATMENT UNDER PROGRAM. HOWEVER, THIS IS AN INTERNAL PROBLEM.

4. I STATED THAT US CONCERN FOR WELFARE OF OGADENI PEOPLES IS NOT RECENT BUT DATES BACK MANY YEARS, EVEN BEFORE REVOLUTION. FACT OF INTERNATIONAL LIFE WAS THAT OTHER COUNTRIES IN REGION WERE CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF RESPRSALS AGAINST OGADENI POPULATION, ESPECIALLY GIVEN UNEVEN ETHIOPIAN RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS. I URGED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO POSSIBILITY OF NEUTRAL OBSERVERS IN REGION AND THAT SHOLE OF MESSAGE IN AIDE MEMOIRE BE GIVEN THOUGHTGUL APPRAISAL WITHIN ETHIOPIAN GOVT.

5. BERHANE SAID HE REALIZED THERE IS GREAT AMOUNT OF EFFORT BEING DEVOTED BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THEM. HE HOPED THIS WOULD CONTINUE. HE ADDED FOR EMPHASIS HOWEVER, THAT HE WAS STRUCK BY FACT THAT USG COULD NOT PROVIDE ARMS TO ETHIOPIA WHEN IT WAS CLEAR THAT SHE HAD BEEN INVADED BUT THAT USG WAS NOW PREPARED TO OFFER WEAPONS TO

SOMALIA EVEN THOUGH ETHIOPIA HAD GIVEN ASSURANCES TO PRES  
CARTER THAT ETHIOPIA DID NOT INTEND TO INVADE SOMALIA. I RE-  
ITERATED AARON MESSAGE THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO HELP SOMEONE  
WHILE HE WAS POKING YOU IN EYE AND EMPHASIZED TO BERHANE  
THAT HE WELL UNDERSTOOD POLITICAL REALITIES IN US AND INTER-  
NATIONAL COMMUNITY EFFECTING US POLICY. BERHANE THEN ASSURED  
ME THAT HE WOULD PRESENT CONTENTS OF MESSAGE TO FONMIN AND  
HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT FOR THEIR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERA-  
TION.

MATHERON

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014